

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM

TOM DAVIS, CHAIRMAN



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
March 9, 2006

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Government Reform Committee Approves Five-Year Extension of D.C. Tuition Assistance Grant Program

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Congressman Tom Davis (R-VA) is pleased to announce that the House Committee on Government Reform today unanimously approved a five-year extension of the popular District of Columbia Tuition Assistance Program, which helps make a college education more affordable for D.C. residents.

Since its inception in 1999, more than 6,500 District students have used the program's grants to attend colleges and universities across the country. President Bush, in his fiscal year 2007 budget proposal, allocated \$35 million for the program, up \$10 million from two years earlier.

"The story of the D.C. Tuition Assistance Program is a story of undeniable success," Davis said. "This program has helped send deserving students to college and helped stabilize the District of Columbia by giving tax-paying families a reason to stay in the city, rather than a reason to leave."

The Committee approved H.R. 4855, which reauthorizes the D.C. College Access Act through 2012, on a unanimous voice vote.

In 2004, Congress reauthorized the College Access Act for an additional two years, through fiscal 2007. That means that the Tuition Assistance Program is authorized for the current appropriations cycle, but Congress must act to reauthorize the Program for fiscal years 2008 through 2012 to ensure that the President's budget proposal next year provides sufficient funding for the Program.

Davis and Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-D.C.), co-sponsors of H.R. 4855, together sponsored the original College Access legislation in 1999 to provide financial assistance to D.C. high school graduates pursuing higher education opportunities in colleges and universities in other states. The legislation levels the playing field by making up for the District of Columbia's lack of a state university system – a benefit available to high school graduates in the rest of the nation.

The Tuition Assistance Program applies to District of Columbia residents who have graduated from high school and are seeking an undergraduate degree. It covers the difference between in-state and out-of-state tuition rates, up to \$10,000 per year, at public colleges and universities in other states. Additionally, the Program provides \$2,500 annually in tuition assistance to D.C. residents who attend private colleges and universities in the counties surrounding the District. Finally, an amendment to the legislation in 2001 authorized the Program to provide \$2,500 annually to D.C. high school graduates who attend private Historically Black Colleges and Universities throughout the country.

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